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LETTER DATED 21 SEPTEMBER 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 16 September 1998 from Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, concerning the right of Iraq to express its views on the claims submitted to the United Nations Compensation Commission, in order to prevent the fraud, extortion and exaggeration resorted to by those claiming compensation.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

[Original: Arabi

Letter dated 16 September 1998 from the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

On 2 July 1998 the Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission published Decision 52 concerning the sixth instalment of claims by individuals relating to compensation for damages under US$ 100,000 (category C claims). This decision settled 64,425 claims by individuals, awarding a total of US$ 739,730,850.90 to citizens of 72 countries and individuals from eight international agencies and organizations. Each country was provided with the details of the claims made by its citizens, whereas Iraq, the country that wil have to deprive its own people in order to settle these claims, knew nothing o the nature of the claims or anything about them. It was merely informed of th name of the country, the number of claims and the recommended award, and could make no observations thereon.

This procedure is part of the arbitrary policy pursued by the United Nations Compensation Commission of denying Iraq information about the claims a a means of preventing it from mounting any sort of defence of its rights. Claims are decided on the basis of the information provided by the claimant an the recommendation made by the panels of Commissioners, who have only a very short time in which to make judgements on hundreds of thousands of claims. Th resources of the Iraqi people have thus become the target of the fraud, extortion and exaggeration resorted to by those claiming compensation.

With regard to the above-mentioned decision, the Government of Iraq has reservations about an award made to any individual, corporation or country without Iraq having been given the details of the claim or offered the opportunity to defend its rights and its people's assets by putting its point view to the panels of Commissioners or the Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission. We also reserve our right to dispute these claims if we are not given access to all the information needed for an objecti response.

In bringing this matter to your attention, the Government of Iraq request you to intervene personally in order to protect the resources of the Iraqi people from the extortionate and fraudulent practices for which the United Nations Compensation Commission is being used, and in order to offer Iraq the opportunity to consider the information relating to the claims for compensatio comment thereon and provide the Commission with information on the claims.

(Signed) Tariq AZIZ
Deputy Prime Minister and
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affai
Baghdad, 16 September 1998